



Del Bonita Work Session

By: Jim Greil, Airports / Airways Bureau Chief

On Saturday July 8, a reunion of friends, new and old, took place at the annual Del Bonita fly-in and work session. This is a special fly-in as it is a multi-nation fly-in, jointly arranged by the Montana Aeronautics Division and the Alberta Flying Farmers. The fly-in takes place each year at the Del Bonita International Airport located between Cut Bank, Mont. and Del Bonita, Alberta. The Del Bonita airport is one of three international airports administered by the Montana Aeronautics Division and is located directly on the US and Canadian border in the international boundary's "no man zone".

The fly-in is usually well attended by participants from both sides of the border; however, US participants never seem to outnumber the Canadians, so we'll have to work on that. The Canadian participants also provide a fantastic barbeque and feed each and every year that is just great. This year's level of participation was as good as ever, and we were certainly lucky to see so many of our friends from both sides of the border. Max Murphy from our office and I traveled to this event to help out, as usual, and provide some of the tools of the trade used to help improve the runway and "bomb" some gophers.

After having the usual "where is the airport" conversation and initially lining up on a street somewhere a couple of miles north in Canada, we finally realized our error and spotted the actual airport to the south. Even though the airstrip is located directly on the international border and is lined with white runway cones, it still can be incredibly difficult to find. Thank goodness for GPS!

This year, participants did what they usually do by filling runway badger and gopher holes, using poison smoke to kill the pesky rodents, replacing damaged runway cones, clearing weeds and other general upkeep. After sweltering in the unusually hot early July sun, we came back to the comfort of lawn chairs, shade under aircraft wings and of course, the best hamburger cookout around. As we dined, we listened to short presentations by various representatives from US and Canadian Customs, Alberta Flying Farmers, Nav Canada, Montana Pilots Association, as well as giving a spiel from our own Montana Aeronautics Division. After the speeches were over and our bellies were full, it came time once again to depart and say



goodbye for another year to our buddies across the border. I know it's a whole year until the next one, but I'm already looking forward to it.

Traveling to the Del Bonita airport is easy and the runway is in especially good shape. The airport is located approximately 31 miles north of Cut Bank Mont. and is located directly on the international border. Although it sounds easy, it is actually fairly tricky to locate the US/Canadian border by the air as there is no obvious demarcation, either natural or artificial, that separates the two countries. For best results, try following Highway 213 north from Cut Bank until you are able to spot the two Customs border shacks on each side of the highway. The runway is turf and is covered by thick, dense, short grass. Runway length is 4,440 ft, width is 65 ft. and elevation is 4,336 ft, so even light twins should have no problem with operations.

Make sure to call Customs one hour prior to landing if entering or leaving the US, or just as a courtesy even if you're only visiting. After landing, be sure to park in the respective US apron tie-down side. Call the Division for more information, and we'll see you there next year!

See more photos from the work session on page 3.

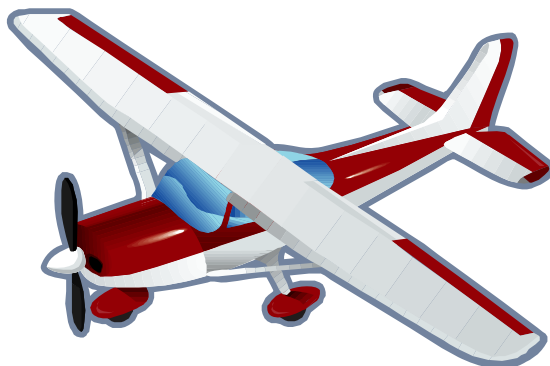
Administrator's Column

Bon Voyage Doug! FAA Northwest Mountain Regional Administrator Doug Murphy has been selected to lead the FAA Southern Region, headquartered in Atlanta. Doug came to Northwest Mountain Region in October 2003. During his time at the helm of our great region, Doug has participated in the annual Montana Aviation Conference and the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) annual conference. A controller by profession, Doug has enjoyed a 35-year FAA career and has held a number of key executive and management positions. He has been a tremendous partner and asset during his nearly three-year assignment to Northwest Mountain. Thanks Doug for your friendship, efforts and interest in the Northwest Mountain Region. Best of luck in Atlanta – the FAA Southern Region's gain is our loss.

Great News: The Bert Mooney Airport received word this week from the FAA that the Procedure Review Board recommended approval for its waiver request returning the ILS approach to service as previously published. The NOTAMs (both public and special) that removed the ILS approach from service have been cancelled.

More Good News: FAA Administrator Marion Blakey briefed an overflowing crowd and answered questions during her fourth appearance at EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh. She announced the average time for receiving a special issuance medical certification is now 16 days, down from several months. In other good news, Blakey said the rulemaking process is underway to extend the term of a first-class medical certificate from six months to one year and to extend the term of third-class medicals for pilots under the age of 40 from two years to five years. These two changes should reduce annual applications by 75,000 resulting in faster service to all. On another topic, the Administrator said the airspace system as it exists today cannot handle projected growth and must be transformed with increased capacity. Questioned on how the new system would be funded, Blakey said a new funding system does not have to include broad user fees for the general aviation community. "There are multiple ways to recover the costs, and I for one do not believe that a one-size-fits-all approach is going to be the right solution. While it's important that each group pay its fair share of costs, let me be crystal clear, we do not want to create a funding system that stifles general aviation," said Blakey. During Administrator Blakey's time at the FAA, two significant new segments of general aviation have bloomed and continue to grow — light-sport aircraft and the very light jets.

Transportation Appropriations Bill Summary: The full appropriations committee passed the transportation appropriations bill that will be sent to the full Senate for consideration sometime this fall. In brief, the bill includes the following funding: Essential Air Service Program, \$117 million; FAA Operations, \$8.366 billion; Facilities & Equipment, \$2,549 billion; Airport Improvement Program, \$3.52 billion; Research, Engineering and Development, \$135.5 million. These amounts are at or slightly below fiscal year 2006 funding levels.



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Del Bonita Work Session continued....



Volunteers worked hard all day and were rewarded with a delicious barbeque before flying home.

Calendar

August 18-19 – Wing's & Wheel's Fly-In, Powell, Wyo. Flour Bombing, Hangar Dance, Air Show and more. For further information, phone Orville Moore at (307) 754-5234.

August 18-20 – Montana Fun Weekend – Cut Bank Airport. Fly-In with breakfast on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Car and airplane show and shine with prizes. Car show and burn out contest, Friday night lawn-chair drive-in movie, bowling ball bombing, RC models, drag racing on Saturday evening and stock car racing on Saturday.

August 19 – National Aviation Day.

August 19 – Eighth Annual Polson Fly-In and Swap Meet. Pancake breakfast, lunch and pitchfork fondue (steak fry), swap meet, airplane rides, Soroptimist's Wine Festival that evening. For more information, email Bill Olson at weo@commbank.net.

August 26 – Laurel Airport Day. The International Cessna 170 Association and Northern Skies Aviation are hosting a fly-in breakfast at 8:00 a.m. at Laurel Municipal Airport (6S8) with maintenance seminars, spot landing, flour bombing and aircraft judging. Free camping available. Please contact Steve Inman at (406) 861-8483 for information.

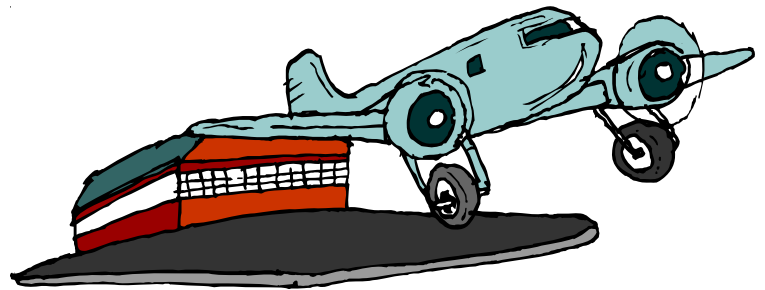
September 9 – Dillon Aviation Day. For further information phone Jean Devivo at (406) 683-5242.

September 15-17 – Mountain Search Pilot Clinic, Kalispell. For further information, contact (406) 444-2506.

September 23-24 – Civil Air Patrol Emergency Service Training Exercise, Laurel Airport, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; Sunday 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. www.mtwg.cap.gov.

October 7 – Hirsch Ranch Fly-In, 30 miles northwest of Miles City.

October 7 – Plains Airport Dedication – Pancake breakfast 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.; hamburgers 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. – dedication ceremony at 1:00 p.m.



Division Hires New Airport Manager

Anthony Bean was recently hired as the new manager at the Yellowstone Airport in West Yellowstone. Anthony was born and raised in Montana living in Missoula, Jordan, Glendive, White Sulphur Springs and Townsend. He graduated from high school in Broadwater County. Anthony has eight years of military service in the U.S. Marine Corps working as an Aviation Ground Support Technician and as a Cryogenics Technician (production of highly pure liquid and gaseous oxygen and nitrogen for aviation purposes). He was on a six month deployment to the Middle East with a Marine Expeditionary Unit on board the USS Essex supporting aviation operations involving numerous helicopters and the AV8B Harrier. Due to a growing interest in aviation, Anthony attended college while in the Marine Corps, receiving a degree in Aviation Management from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Anthony completed airport management internships in Jacksonville, N.C. and Helena, Mont. He worked at the Transportation Security Administration as a Security Officer and Lead Security Officer for more than two years, leaving to take his new position as Yellowstone Airport Manager. We look forward to working with Anthony and welcome him to the Division.

Schafer Meadows Annual Work Session

More than 30 aircraft and 100 volunteers gathered in the Great Bear Wilderness to perform annual maintenance on the Schafer Meadows airstrip. Deb Mucklow, USFS Spotted Bear Ranger, assigned tasks to crews of volunteer workers for projects to be performed and briefed all on safety procedures. Endeavors included the annual “changing of the wind sock”; scrubbing/sanitizing bear boxes and outhouses; replacing fence rails and jack legs; cutting brush on the approach end of the runway; and hauling and packing dirt on bare/low spots on the runway.

Those in attendance anxiously await “unveiling” of the hosted dinner — always a surprise and special treat. Volunteers were not disappointed with an endless offering of peel and eat shrimp. Corn on the cob, fresh baguettes and home made ice cream with toppings completed the meal. Roughing it in the wilderness doesn’t get much better than that! Many thanks to Loren Smith and Jane Mart of Prairie Kraft Specialties, Great Falls for generously providing the Saturday evening dinner each year.



Pictured are just a few of the many workers who volunteered their time. Thanks so much to everyone – this work session wouldn't be possible without your hard work and dedication.



Staggerwing Fly-In



The annual Staggerwing Fly-In was held at Seeley Lake Airport July 15 and 16. On Saturday evening a delicious prime rib dinner prepared by the Lindemer family was served, and Sunday morning the annual pancake breakfast sponsored by the Seeley Lake Flying Club and Seeley Lake Senior Citizens drew a big crowd. Everyone in attendance enjoyed the great food, perfect weather and beautiful aircraft on display. For those who haven't had the chance to visit this airport, you're missing out. The flying club worked hard putting in a pilots campground with picnic tables and fire boxes purchased through the Montana Pilot's Association Recreation Airstrip Fund. The MDT Aeronautics Division acquired a lease from Missoula County for one acre of ground adjoining the airport for the purpose of the campground and assisted with fencing materials and other amenities in the campground. Other services include water, toilet, propane grill, bicycles and a courtesy vehicle for those who want to fly in and stay awhile.



Photo by: George Kounis of Pilot Getaways Magazine

Where Are Those Aviation Students Now?

By: Jeanne MacPherson, Bureau Chief



Michele Schmitz Ewing from Jefferson City, Mont. attended the Division's Aviation Career Camp (ACE) ten years ago after becoming interested in aviation the summer before high school. Receiving enormous support from her parents on her passion for aviation, she went on to receive the Montana Pilot's Association Junior Pilot of the year in 1999. This scholarship helped Michele earn her private pilot's license. She attended the University of North Dakota and obtained a bachelors degree in Aviation Management. After college, Michele moved to Phoenix, Ariz. with her new husband, Tim and was a flight instructor for the University of North Dakota Aerospace Foundation.

In March 2004, Michele started working for Piedmont Airlines, based in Charlotte, N.C. She loved the work but longed to get back to the western half of the country. Michele applied and was hired by Horizon Airlines in April 2005 and is a First Officer with Horizon. Michele flies a Dash-8 Q400 and

loves both the airplane she flies and Horizon Airlines. Michele and Tim make their home in Vancouver, Wash. and Michele flies in and out of Montana weekly.

Appearing in the EAA world's largest logbook, "**Michele D. Schmitz** from Jefferson City, Montana flew in a Cessna T-41 with Jeanne MacPherson on July 13, 1996.

Way to go, Michele! We hope to fly with you on Horizon in the near future!

New Business Opens in Stevensville

The Pitstop Inc. recently opened for business on the Stevensville Airport, nestled in the center of the beautiful Bitterroot Valley. The Pitstop Inc. provides a broad range of specialized services for the General Aviation enthusiast. Having over 70 collective years experience, their staff is highly qualified to perform maintenance, modification, fabrication, restoration, quality finish work and much more.

It is a customer-first work place that believes in honesty, commitment and customer satisfaction. The entire staff carries a production background which helps streamline shop flow, consistency and timeline. They love what they do and would love to be a part of **your** maintenance team.

For further information, phone their office at (406) 777-3163 or email pitstopbob@qwest.net. They also have a website under construction and once finished will be www.pitstopmt.com.

We wish them success with their new business.

I WAS AN AIR-TRAFFIC CONTROLLER stationed at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Michigan. One morning we picked up a Montana National Guard passenger aircraft. Instead of identifying the plane by its five-digit tail number, its pilot radioed, "Selfridge Approach, this is Pig Sty One." As we were taught to refer to aircraft by whatever call sign the pilot used, the controller thereafter called the craft "Pig Sty One." Just after touching down, the pilot contacted the tower.

"Selfridge," he said, "our call sign is not 'Pig Sty One.' It is 'Big Sky One,' and we have the governor of Montana on board!"

—Contributed to "Humor In Uniform" by Carl M. Tucker
Provided Courtesy of Reader's Digest.



New Montana License Plate

Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 517, Inc. of Stevensville, Mont. is pleased to announce a new specialty license plate for Montana pilots and other aviation enthusiasts. The license plate features a classic yellow Piper Cub on a background of billowing clouds. The caption at the bottom of the plate reads, "Fly the Big Sky." The formal announcement about the plates was made at a joint meeting of EAA Chapter 517 and the Five Valleys Hangar, Montana Pilots' Association on Monday, June 19.



The new license plate became available July 1 and is available for issue to vehicles outside the normal renewal cycle. Simply contact your local motor vehicle licensing office, pay the \$20 specialty plate fee for the aviation plate (designation EAAC), and a new license plate will be issued without affecting the licensing cycle.

The \$20 fee will be returned to EAA Chapter 517, which was required to pay a \$4,000 application fee to cover the state's initial production costs. EAA Chapter 517, Inc. is a Montana-based, educational, non-profit corporation granted 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. Income earned through the specialty license plate program will be used by EAA Chapter 517 to fund various youth-oriented aviation activities and promote general aviation throughout the state of Montana.

According to the Federal Aviation Administration, there are approximately 5,000 certificated pilots and other aviation professionals residing in Montana.

For more information on the aviation activities of EAA Chapter 517, Inc., go to www.eaa517.org. For more information on the national Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), go to www.eaa.org or www.youngeagles.org.

AOPA Challenges Everyone In Aviation To Find One New Pilot

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) is challenging all pilots nationwide to seek out interested and qualified individuals and help them become new pilots. In the first few weeks of the program nearly 1,000 AOPA members have answered the call to action.

“It’s frightening to know that the pilot population has shrunk 25 percent in the last 25 years,” said AOPA President Phil Boyer. “Every one of us with a passion for flying has an obligation to help reverse this trend. For AOPA, the world’s largest aviation association, that means putting all we have behind the new Project Pilot.”

At the forefront of the program with Boyer is AOPA Project Pilot Spokesman Erik Lindbergh, pilot and grandson of Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh.

“Imagine where we could take general aviation if each one of us who flies found just one more pilot to take to the skies,” said Lindbergh. “In a few short years, we could double the number of pilots — to more than one million. We would all benefit with lower costs and greater clout when it counts. We need everyone to meet the call of this obligation. No one organization or person can do it alone.”

AirShares Elite, a popular general aviation fractional ownership company, is the first corporation to step forward in support of the Project Pilot objective of growing the pilot population.

AirShares Elite, Inc. is supporting AOPA’s Project Pilot by committing \$100,000 in aircraft flight time for their group of aircraft owners to use. The hope is that after a pilot candidate flies in one of the fleet’s technically advanced Cirrus SR22s, they too will be moved by the excitement, safety and benefits that only general aviation can add to both personal and business lifestyles. Using the tools available through Project Pilot, AirShares Elite wants to enable all of their owners to each convert at least one new prospect into a successful student pilot as well as challenge other aviation companies to step forward and support such a worthwhile cause.

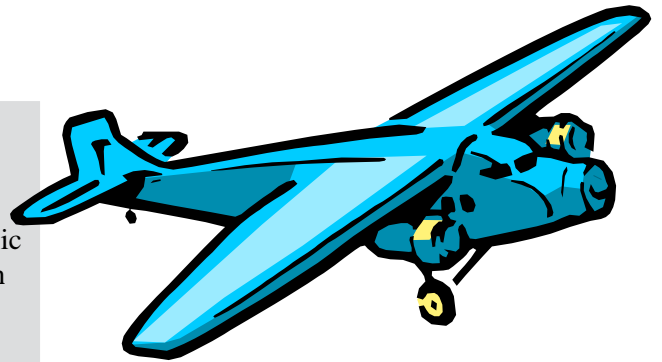
“We applaud AirShares Elite for stepping forward to help keep GA strong and growing,” said Jeff Myers, executive vice president of communications for AOPA with responsibility for the Project Pilot program. “AirShares Elite is a wonderful example of how each of us can use the resources at our fingertips to support the GA of today and tomorrow.”

Mark Your Calendars!

The time is nearing for the 28th annual Mountain Search Pilot Clinic (MSPC). Mark your calendars for September 15-17, 2006, and plan to attend this year’s MSPC based out of the Kalispell City airport. The purpose of the clinic is to train volunteer pilots to safely and efficiently conduct a search in mountainous terrain for a downed aircraft. Not only do volunteer pilots fly in the backcountry, they also receive advanced Emergency Locator ground and field training and survival tactics from the Emergency Response International (ERI).

Each of the 30 pilots attending receives at least two hours of flight instruction, one hour each from a different instructor. The dual flight instruction covers mountain flying basic premises, coordination maneuvers, canyon flying, contour search, finding and investigation of a crash, canyon turns and over the top and down search techniques.

The MSPC fliers are in the mail to all Montana registered pilots. If you have any questions, please call Jeanne MacPherson at Montana Aeronautics Division, (406) 444-2506 or email her at jemacpherson@mt.gov.



**There’s nothing like an airport
for bringing you down to earth.**

— Richard Gordon

A Weight and Balance Issue

Two hunters from Medford, Ore., Sven and Ole, hired a pilot to fly them to Canada to hunt moose. They bagged six. As they started loading the plane for the return trip home, the pilot told them the plane can take only three moose.

The two objected strongly. "Last year vee shot six moose and da pilot let us put dem all on board. He had da same plane as yours."

Reluctantly, the pilot gave in and all six were loaded.

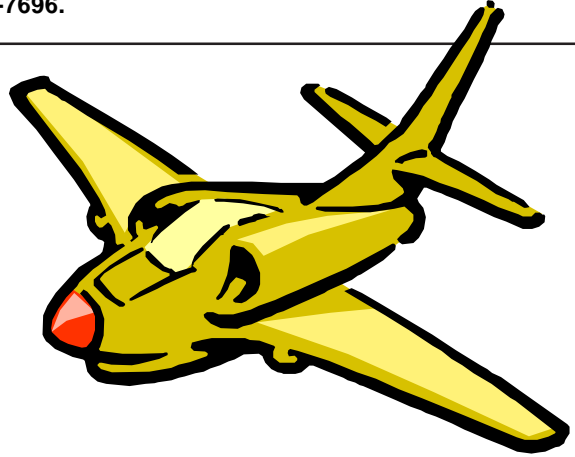
Unfortunately, even on full power the little plane couldn't handle the load and went down a few minutes after takeoff.

Climbing out of the wreck, Ole asked Sven, "Any idea where vee are?"

Sven replied, "I tink we're pretty close to where vee crashed last year."

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